



Public Hearing Summary Report

CDOT Project STU #0062-019 (15215)

August 2009





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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
CDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation
EA	Environmental Assessment
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
RTD	Regional Transportation District
Wadsworth	Wadsworth Boulevard



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1.0 Introduction

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are conducting an Environmental Assessment (EA) to study transportation improvements at the interchange of US 6 (also designated as 6th Avenue) and Wadsworth Boulevard (also designated as Colorado State Highway 121), including improvements along Wadsworth Boulevard (Wadsworth) from approximately 4th Avenue to 14th Avenue in Lakewood, Colorado. The EA was initiated in April 2007, and public scoping, which included an open house and numerous small group meetings, was conducted between May and August 2007. A second open house was held on February 12, 2008, at which the process and results of the Level 1 screening of design concepts were discussed. CDOT held a third set of open houses on April 29, 2008, and May 21, 2008, to present the results of the Level 2 evaluation and discuss the preliminary estimates of environmental, transportation, and property impacts that would result from the design concepts. A meeting was held on June 4, 2008, to discuss the noise assessment and proposed mitigation.

Since the noise impacts and mitigation meeting, CDOT has completed the EA and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation, and initiated the 45-day formal review period (July 13, 2009 - August 26, 2009), during which comments were accepted from agencies and the public. The public hearing was held during the formal review period to provide additional opportunities for the public to review the results of the study and provide written or verbal comments on the EA.

This Public Hearing Summary Report summarizes the notification methods and comments received at the public hearing.



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2.0 Notification of the Public Hearing

Multiple methods of communication were used to notify the public of the public hearing including newsletters, a press release, advertisements in local newspapers, flyers posted in churches and other public locations, and notifications in other media. The project team coordinated extensively with the City of Lakewood staff, who then notified the community of the public hearing in a variety of ways. This section describes the meeting notification and outreach process in greater detail.

2.1 Newsletters

The *Summer 2009 Newsletter* was mailed on July 7, 2009, to the project mailing list. The newsletter consisted of four pages of text announcing the availability of the EA for public review, explaining the project and CDOT's proposed action, providing details on how to provide comments during the 45-day review period, and inviting citizens to the public hearing.

The mailing list consisted of approximately 3,600 businesses, residents, and property owners from neighborhoods adjacent to the project area, as well as other members of the public who requested to be included on the project mailing list. A link to an electronic version of the newsletter (on the project website) was emailed to those citizens that had provided their email addresses at prior open houses or in correspondence with the project team. The newsletter was produced in English with a Spanish version offered upon request. No requests were received for the Spanish translation of the newsletter. See Appendix A for a copy of the *Summer 2009 Newsletter*.

2.2 Press Releases

A press release (see Appendix A) was distributed by CDOT to the CDOT Region 6 media distribution list, which includes more than 90 media outlets in the Denver metropolitan area.

2.3 Newspaper Advertisements

Advertisements announcing the public hearing ran in the *Denver Post* on July 8, 2009 and in the *Lakewood Sentinel* weekly newspaper on July 9, 2009 and July 16, 2009. See Appendix A for a copy of the advertisements.



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2.4 Flyers

A public notice flyer was developed and mailed to churches and hand delivered to community locations, listed in Exhibit 1, on July 8, 2009. See Appendix A for a copy of the flyer.

EXHIBIT 1

Locations for Flyers Advertising the Public Hearing

Category	Location
Churches (mailed)	Bethel Christian Fellowship
	Calvary Baptist Church
	Child Evangelism Fellowship Greater Denver Chapter
	Christ Chapel of the Rockies
	Church of Christ at Jay Street
	Church of Christ Scientist
	First Baptist Church of Lakewood
	First Presbyterian Church of Lakewood
	Grace Fellowship of Lakewood
	Lakewood Church of the Nazarene
	Lakewood United Church of Christ
	Lakewood United Methodist Church
	Light and Life Community Church
	Mountair Christian Church
	New Life Center
	Rock Creek Church
	Seventh Day Baptist Church of Denver
St. Bernadette Catholic Church	
St. Paul's Episcopal Church	
St. Paul's Lutheran Church	
Lakewood Community Locations (hand delivered)	Belmar Library
	Clements Community Center
	Denver Indian Center
	Heritage Center Farmer's Market and Visitors Center
	Market at Belmar (information center on Teller Street)
	Super Wal-Mart (at Colfax and Wadsworth)
	Wal-Mart (at 3rd Avenue and Wadsworth)
	Whole Foods Customer Service
	King Soopers at Allison and Alameda

Source: CH2M HILL, 2009



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2.5 Other Notification Media

Three other notification methods were used to advertise the public hearing: television, websites, and neighborhood groups.

2.5.1 Television

Notice of the meeting ran periodically on the City of Lakewood Public Access Television Channel 8.

2.5.2 Websites

The meeting was advertised on the project website at www.US6Wadsworth.com, which is linked to the main CDOT website. MyLakewood.com, a site devoted to supporting local businesses in Lakewood, advertised the meeting on its website and through an email blast sent to 20,000 Lakewood residents.

2.5.3 Neighborhood Groups

An email announcing the availability of the EA and the public hearing was sent to neighborhood and business group contacts on June 29, 2009.



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3.0 Public Hearing

This section summarizes the venue for the public hearing and describes the meeting format and materials used for exhibits and handouts to the public.

3.1 Location and Attendance

The public hearing was held at the Lakewood City Council Chambers in Lakewood, Colorado, on Wednesday, July 22, 2009, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. This location is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The meeting was attended by members of the public, City of Lakewood staff, CDOT representatives, FHWA staff, local business owners, and property owners. Approximately 96 people attended the meeting, not including CDOT, the consultant, or Lakewood staff. Appendix B includes a copy of the meeting roster, listing the attendees at the meeting.

3.2 Meeting Format and Content

The public hearing was conducted in a mixed open house and presentation format. A court reporter was available to record comments from the public. For the open house portion of the meeting, information stations were set up to cover the following topics:

- Project purpose and need
- Schedule, next steps, and funding
- Proposed Build Alternative design
- Traffic operations
- Proposed noise mitigation
- Drainage improvements and wetland impacts
- Property impacts and CDOT's right-of-way procedures
- Summary of environmental impacts and mitigation
- Historic resources
- Impacts to future Two Creeks Park
- Reference materials and handouts

CDOT and consultant staff were available at the stations and talked with meeting participants about the information provided. The public was encouraged to provide comments in one of the following ways:

- Dictate comments to the court reporter during the open house
- Make a verbal comment at the microphone following the presentation



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- Submit a written comment in the comment box or by mail to the specified address on the back of the comment form
- Submit a comment on the project website at www.US6Wadsworth.com

Throughout the evening, staff were available at the public comments station to assist with any questions relating to making comments. Public comments received by project staff during informal open house discussions are summarized in Section 4.0 of this report.

A PowerPoint® presentation was given at 6 p.m. The presentation was recorded for broadcasting on Lakewood Channel 8, but because of technical difficulties experienced during the recording, re-broadcast was not possible. Appendix C includes a copy of the public hearing presentation.

A Spanish translator was available, but no Spanish-only speakers were present at the meeting. An unsupervised children's area was also available, but no one took advantage of this service.

3.3 Display Boards and Handouts

Display boards used at the public hearing illustrated the following topics (see Appendix D for illustrations):

- Project Purpose and Need
- Key Project Milestones
- Funding and Next Steps
- Proposed US 6/Wadsworth Interchange
- Build Alternative - US 6/Wadsworth Interchange
- Build Alternative - Wadsworth Boulevard
- Access Management
- Year 2035 Traffic Levels of Service
- Levels of Service Definitions
- Noise Mitigation
- Noise Wall Aesthetics
- Build Alternative Impacts and Mitigation
- Estimated Property Impacts
- Drainage Improvements and Wetlands Impacts
- Water Quality Treatment
- Historic Properties in the Study Area
- Section 4(f) Park Resource - Future Two Creeks Park Impacts



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The following handouts were available to provide more detailed information on the public hearing as well as ways to provide formal comments (see Appendix E):

- Agenda
- Public Review and Comment Information
- Public Hearing Comment Form
- Executive Summary

Copies of the *Summer 2009 Newsletter* were also available. Copies of the EA were available on CD with hard copies available by request. The Reference Materials table included information specific to the environmental process, right-of-way acquisition, noise analysis, and supporting documentation.



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4.0 Public Hearing Comments

Members of the public provided verbal comments through discussions with project staff during the open house. The public was notified that these comments were considered informal and would not be responded to in the decision document. To make a formal comment, the public was encouraged to dictate a verbal comment to the court reporter during the open house, speak at the microphone after the presentation, or submit a written comment on a comment form. Comments made in any of these ways would receive an official response in the decision document (anticipated Fall 2009). The sections below summarize the comments received at the meeting. Informal comments received verbally by project staff during the public hearing are summarized in Section 4.1; formal comments dictated to the court reporter during the open house are summarized in Section 4.2; formal comments made at the microphone following the presentation are summarized in Section 4.3; and formal comments received in writing are summarized in Section 4.4. Formal verbal comments received are included in their entirety in Appendix F, while written comments submitted on comment forms are presented in Appendix G.

4.1 Summary of Verbal Comments Made to Staff During the Open House

Topics eliciting the largest number of verbal comments at the public hearing were property impacts, noise, drainage improvements, construction, access, and traffic operations. In general, meeting attendees were supportive of the Build Alternative.

Property Impacts

- Concern over acquisition of property, including fair compensation for relocation.
- Concern over impacts to landscaping.
- Questions regarding historic significance of private property.

Noise

- Request to consider European pavement; even though they are more expensive, they are quieter.
- Concern over noise reflection and request for sound absorptive materials that could be used for walls.
- Concern over noise in areas that have not been identified for noise mitigation.



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- Requests for additional noise monitoring; concern over noise at residences situated higher in elevation than the noise source of the highway that had not been measured as part of the study.

Drainage Improvements

- Requests for additional improvements to McIntyre Gulch upstream of 6th Avenue and Dry Gulch along 10th Avenue.
- Concern over existing and future conveyance capacity of drainage channels.
- Concern over the possibility of increased flow through private property (related to improvements to the culvert under Wadsworth at 12th Avenue).
- Questions regarding improvements to the South Lakewood Gulch culvert under US 6.
- Concern over water quality pond placement and resultant impacts to private property.
- Questions regarding the function of water quality ponds.

Construction

- Requests for information on next steps and the schedule for construction.
- Questions regarding noise abatement during construction.
- Questions regarding dust control, working hours for construction, and communication with local businesses/residents during construction.

Access and Traffic Operations

- Concern over access closures and resultant impacts to properties.
- Requests for access modifications (in particular driveway access).
- Requests for improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- Questions regarding improvements proposed by the Regional Transportation District (RTD) at 13th Avenue.
- Questions regarding whether access to Carr Street would be maintained.
- Concern over the increase in traffic signals on Wadsworth.
- Concern over the queue length in left-turn lanes for northbound Wadsworth to westbound US 6 movement.
- Concern over backstreet circulation near 10th and 12th Avenues.



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- Concern over access to Wadsworth from frontage roads, traffic movements, and U-turns on Wadsworth near Highland Drive.

4.2 Summary of Verbal Comments Dictated to the Court Reporter during the Open House

Five people dictated formal comments to the court reporter during the open house. Comments were related to noise and drainage improvements, and are summarized below. Transcripts of these comments are included in Appendix F. FHWA will provide official responses to these comments in their decision document (anticipated Fall 2009).

Noise

- Concern about noise reflection from concrete noise walls; request that sound-absorbent walls be constructed to address noise for residences that are situated higher in elevation than 6th Avenue.
- Concern about noise walls blocking commercial signage and request to move walls to the back of the building so that signage is unobstructed.
- Concern about noise during construction.

Drainage Improvements

- Question regarding the impact of construction at 6th Avenue and how this will affect Lakewood's plan to improve McIntyre Gulch between Carr Street and Wadsworth.
- Question regarding culvert expansion and flooding near Two Creeks Park. Will the culvert be widened both where it enters and exits the park?

4.3 Summary of Verbal Comments Received at the Microphone Following the Presentation

Three people made formal comments at the microphone following the presentation. Each speaker was given 3 minutes to make their comments. Participants were reminded that their comments would be responded to in writing in the decision document. Comments received at the microphone were related to pedestrian and bicycle safety and noise, and are summarized below. Transcripts of the presentation, including comments received at the microphone, are included in Appendix F. FHWA will provide official responses to these comments in their decision document (anticipated Fall 2009).



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Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

- Concern about pedestrians and bicyclists crossing 6th Avenue; would like to see overpass or underpass so that conflicts with traffic can be avoided.

Noise

- Question regarding options considered for noise mitigation, in particular options other than noise walls.
- Request use of absorbent materials so that concrete noise walls do not reflect the noise to residences that are situated higher in elevation than 6th Avenue.
- Requests for additional noise monitoring in the northwest quadrant at homes farther back; concern about noise generated by the US 6 bridge over Wadsworth traveling down into neighborhoods.

4.4 Summary of Written Comments

Six comment forms were received; four comment forms were handed in at the public hearing on July 22, 2009 and two additional comment forms were mailed to the project team after the meeting. These written comments were entered into the comment database, which records all individual public comments received during the course of the study. Written comments centered on concerns relating to access and traffic operations, mobility, impacts to businesses during construction, and noise. The completed forms are compiled in Appendix G. FHWA will provide official responses to these comments in their decision document (anticipated Fall 2009).

Access and Traffic

- Concern that project is unnecessary. Added stoplights increase the chance of accidents, traffic, and air pollution (from idling vehicles). Leave the existing design alone and adjust the lane striping and speed limits.
- Support for the Build Alternative as the best solution to existing traffic problems. Especially in the northeast quadrant, the encroachment of commercial and through traffic should be greatly diminished. Once the service roads are reconfigured and noise walls are constructed in the northeast quadrant, new signage will be needed to aid in the establishment of new patterns of use.
- Concern about U-turns for traffic turning north from 6th Avenue to Wadsworth resulting in traffic backups and rear-end collisions.
- Need to pay special attention to traffic flow in the 9th Avenue area.



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Mobility

- Consider the needs of senior citizens. Would like to see buses circulating within neighborhoods providing service to key destinations.
- Would like express service between 6th Avenue and downtown [Citizen does not clarify what type of express transit is desirable].
- Would like to see emphasis on alternative modes of transportation, with particular importance given to pedestrian and bicycle safety. The provision of transit and roadway improvements presents opportunities to develop alternative modes.

Impacts to Businesses during Construction

- Need to address impacts to businesses if portions of Wadsworth are blocked off during construction. Also consider the need to accommodate directional signage that may not otherwise be allowed under Lakewood's ordinances.

Noise

- Noise walls in the northeast quadrant of the interchange should not only reduce noise, but also visually define the boundaries of separation between residential and commercial uses.
- Concern over the impact of noise walls with regards to the potential for trash piling up between the walls and adjacent properties. Would like CDOT to consider options (engineering, fines, etc.) to prevent this problem.
- Consider reconfiguring driveway to 7373 W. 6th Ave. to allow for an uninterrupted noise wall on the south edge of the property. The noise wall could be on the north side of two-way frontage road all the way to Crescent Lane.

APPENDIX A

Notices and Advertisements

APPENDIX B

Public Hearing Roster

APPENDIX C

Public Hearing Presentation

APPENDIX D

Public Hearing Display Boards

APPENDIX E

Public Hearing Handouts

APPENDIX F

Public Hearing Transcript/Formal Verbal
Comments

APPENDIX G

Written Comments
